

Newsletter

2/02

European Federation of City Farms

Kinderboerderijen

**City Farms and
Community Gardens**

**Ferme d' Animation
Educatives**

4H-garder

4H-Farms



**Kinder-, Jeugd- en
Gezinsboerderijen**

Ferme d'Enfants

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Conference 2002

European City Farms Conference from May 29 till June 2 2002 in Rotterdam

'Rotterdam, it was really great, thank you!'

The twelfth European City Farms Conference in Rotterdam

The twelfth European City Farms Conference took place from May 29 till June 2. It was the third time that this conference was organised in The Netherlands (in the Hague in 1987 and in Maastricht in 1995). The organisation was in the hands of the City of Rotterdam in cooperation with the European Federation of City Farms (EFCF) and the Dutch City Farms organisation (SKBN). Fifty participants, ranging from farm worker to policy makers from Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the United Kingdom, Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands, attended the conference.



Delegates arrive at Rotterdam City Council

The theme was: 'Farming the city, a practical way to learn about sustainability'. Sustainability was the link between all the subjects of the conference programme, which lasted for five days. Roel van Raay of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Nature, held an interesting talk about government programmes such as 'Learning for Sustainability' and their relevance to city farms. He pointed out that a city farm is still often seen as just 'a nice place with animals' and not as an interesting, easily accessible place to bring across the concept of sustainability. The written version of his talk was in great demand with the participants.

The Rotterdam city councillor, Nico Janssen, spoke highly of the educational and recreational value of 'his' city farms. De Bokkesprong City Farm, for example, which will have to give up some of its land to accommodate an increasing

volume of traffic, will not disappear but be given a 4800 m² field on the roof of the underground station behind the farm. Another option is to move the farm to the Vierhavenstrip, a city park to be developed right on top of an industrial site.



Delegates listen to speeches

These were not the only topics discussed during the conference. Theo Meyer, MP and PR chairman of the Dutch City Farm Federation, talked about the proposed accreditation of Dutch City Farms and the aim to transfer the Dutch Federation to a professional office of information, public relations and education. One thing and another led to discussions by the participants during the conference.

Everywhere in Europe City Farms are concerned with and working on hygiene codes for City Farms. Professionalization is also an item discussed everywhere in Europe. An example of an already existing professional organisation is, e.g., the British Federation with a staffed office in Bristol and workers in the regions. The British Federation even persuaded Prince Charles to become its patron. The Federation also succeeded in raising funds for British City Farms that had been hit hard by the Foot and Mouth crisis.



Farming in the City - a practical way to learn about sustainability!

Marc de Staercke, chairman of the EFCf went more deeply into the importance of cooperation between City Farm projects in Europe and far beyond in countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan, India and the United States. However different all these projects may be, sustainability is one of the linking factors of networking and cooperation. More and more countries recognise the importance of sustainable agriculture. City Farms can play a key role in these developments, especially when it concerns the relationship between man, agriculture and nature.

At six of these locations there is an Educational Garden as well. A perfect situation to put cooperation into practice!



How to eat raw herring - the dutch way

The City of Rotterdam's director of Sport and Recreation, Gerard Reussink, explained, amongst others, how his department works. Rotterdam City Farms, the centres for environmental education, the educational gardens, the cultural-historical garden and the botanical garden are the responsibility of the Department of Sport and Recreation. Rotterdam has seven City Farms spread throughout the city. Together they attract a million visitors per year. All eight City Farms are open seven days a week. The eight centres for environmental education mainly target primary schools, but they also organise activities for secondary schools and for the general public. Several target groups, ranging from primary school pupils to elderly people, practise ecological gardening in the Educational Gardens from May till the end of October. There is a combination of a city farm and a centre for environmental education at eight locations.



Delegates play children

The visit to Blijdorp Zoo started with a talk by Robert van Herik, Head of the Zoo's Educational Department. In the 'Shark Room' he talked about how Zoo standards had changed over the past two hundred years. Animal accommodation has changed from 'a collection' of animals, neatly arranged in cages and stables, to typical biotopes. The handling of the animals has changed as well: to-day wild has to remain wild, with no crowd pullers such as dressed monkeys having lunch like human beings.



Children in the Educational Garden

In the early days of the Zoo there was very little education with the exception of information boards made by the 'weirdoes' in the department. Education then was mainly a side issue and seldom even called education. Education today is recognised as an essential aspect of the zoo mission: nature conservation, responsible breeding programmes, reintegration of animals to the wild and sustainability. Sustainability is found in all the Zoo's activities: from the animal enclosures to the ticket office. After his interesting talk the participants were treated to a behind the scenes guided tour of the Oceanium.



Delegates meet children

Sport and Recreation did a great job organising a varied programme about City Farms, centres for environmental

education and gardens. You simply could not miss the farm atmosphere at the conference. There was a imitation milking cow in the Town Hall's entrance hall and the platform was decorated with straw bales and a wheelbarrow. Things got off to an interesting start when Sjakel van Wesemael, Head of Nature Recreation, welcomed the participants to the city of Amsterdam; understandable if you have worked in Amsterdam for as long as she had, one can turn a blind eye to this slip of the tongue. She made amends to the farm workers by promising the real 'die-hards' among them a place in the ground or a statue in his or her own farm.



A lot of impressions and experiences - make the participants head go round

The conference programme was planned in such a way that, despite the fact that the participants did not visit all the Rotterdam farms, centres and gardens, they could fully experience every element of Rotterdam's methods. This helped give the conference a very relaxed atmosphere with plenty of time to exchange views and to hear new ideas. The participants were quite interested in activities that can be realised jointly, such as garden design, teaching methods and opportunities to experience nature. Earth Education for instance, at the Kralingen centre for environmental education, where participants experienced a nature trail. The participants were also very interested in the activities of the Eko-kids at De Kooi City Farm. The children showed the participants how to build a creepycrawlies 'hotel'. The cultural-historical garden and the botanical garden were also very much appreciated.

The participants were given a very good picture of the possibilities of City Farm work in a big city. Furthermore, they experienced Dutch culture both literally and figuratively: they rode a bike, they tasted raw herring, sauerkraut with meat balls and sausage and went on a pancake boat tour of the harbour. Everybody was full of praise for the organisation of the conference and penned their appreciation unabandonedly on the wall paper during the fare-well party:

Rotterdam it was really great, thank you'.

News from UK

Our membership has increased from 180 to 221 groups over the last 18 months; 51 of these are city farms. We know of a further 10 groups that plan to set up new city farms in the UK. We are pleased to have our first member in Eire, the Kerry Earth Education Pack.

September 2002 will see the launch of the Allotment Regeneration Initiative, a project which we are running in partnership with the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) with =A3500,000 funding from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. The initiative will focus on ways in which allotments can be better managed and protected from development.

The Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, has just published a biodiversity strategy which, amongst its many recommendations, mentions the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens as a partner for developing existing and future city farms in London.

Plans are presently underway for the September 2003 EFCF Conference. This is likely to be held at Heeley City Farm in Sheffield - further details will be provided as they are available.

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News from Germany

**Speech given by Renate Künast,
Federal Minister of Consumer
Protection, Food and Agriculture of
Germany on the occasion of the
14th National Conference of the Soil
Association on the Future of
Farming**

My vision for the Future of Agriculture

Thank you for giving me the honour of holding the closing international speech here today. You are now looking back on three days of surely highly exciting talks on the future of farming.

With this conference you have already started to fulfil one of my strongest visions, which is **agriculture to become an important public issue again**.

My vision is, that people talk and care about how their foods – the German word for foods actually means “Mittel zum Leben (source of life or essentials to life)”, are being produced and processed. That they establish a relationship to the origin of their daily diet.

Especially city dwellers often lack a direct relation to what comes to their table every day. Thus, they have also lost touch with the rural areas, where the foods are produced. We shouldn't forget, that we are talking about the biggest part of our country's surface - in Germany, for example, about 80% of it, which are used for farming and forestry purposes!

I increasingly ask myself:

What do we want our countryside to look like in the future? How should we shape rural development and its support? If we do not want to accept that rural areas will be completely dominated by cleared-out landscapes one day.

What will the village 2020 look like?

If we do not want to accept that it is solely marked by commercial farming and by deserted villages and dormitory towns otherwise. That most people staying there do this mostly at night in their dormitory towns.

During my first visit to Great Britain as Minister, I was delighted by the statements of the Soil Association and especially enjoyed the **motto “Eat the landscape”**. It brought my ideas, my policy concepts and even my visions all together, summarised in just three words.

Just imagine! You eat cereals, vegetables and meat while visualising the landscape. If the landscapes pleases you, ethically and aesthetically, what is there on your plate will give you a real treat. You will feel the care devoted to this farm produce, the esteem in which it is held and also put more emphasis on the preparation of your meal. You will want to share your meals and thus develop an intense relationship with what you are eating. Foods then will again become a focus of social relations.

There are social, ecological and ethical elements to our relationship with our food. These are the very criteria we also apply to our policy actions ultimately.

These criteria form the basis of our model of sustainable land management and welfare-oriented animal husbandry. Organic farming plays a key pioneering role here.

Our definition of **sustainability** always implies its social, ecological and economic dimensions:

Social, as we assume that organically sustainable management and marketing as well as a welfare-oriented husbandry create more jobs, strengthen peasant farms and leave value-added in the regions. They can also intensify relations with urban communities, especially if they come along with multifunctionality.

Ecological, as we assume that extensive and welfare-oriented livestock farming causes less harm to the environment. And that not only in our own country, but also in a global context. After all, forage-growing in so-called Third World regions, for instance, leads to an **overexploitation of tropical forests**.

Not to elaborate on the increased use of pesticides, insecticides and herbicides in **conventional farming** polluting soils, water and air!

The economic dimension refers to the last point, in particular, as conventional farming has caused - at least so far - high follow-up costs by straining soils, water and air. To date these costs have not been included in production costs and are financed by the general public via taxes.

But sustainable land management and animal welfare must also benefit individual farmers. **While organic products must be affordable for large groups of consumers, they must, quite simply, also be worth their price.** The German term “preiswert” (value for money) puts it very nicely.

The organic market is booming!

The fact that organic farming has experienced such an upswing in Germany in the last year is of course very pleasing. Credit for this is also due to the **Eco-label**, which finally establishes clarity in the thicket of trademarks. It releases organic products from their niche status and puts them on supermarket shelves.

The trademarks now give consumers key additional information. They help consumers to choose between different organic production levels.

The figures are not bad at all. In Germany alone we can record **a 30% rise in demand across all product groups**. The demand for pig and poultry meat as well as eggs, for example, could not even be met.

Even **beef sales** now exceed last year's turnover by 10-20%. This clearly shows that beef and beef are not the same thing and that consumer confidence determines where farmers can reap **economic rewards**. The organic meat sector can now benefit from its pioneering role in sustainable and welfare-oriented production methods.

In 2001 we **expect an increase in the cultivated area by 20 to 25 percent** in Germany. This development gives many farmers great opportunities and security in shaping their future – and that in coordinance with the changing international framework.

I am particularly delighted to see small farmers in **the so-called Third World countries** being able to earn their living this way. **Fair trade in organic foods offers them a great chance of cultivating for exports** for their own benefit by circumventing dumping prices for coffee on global markets, for example.

In Germany we decided on an **Eco-label at EU level** to render organic products **attractive for large food retailing chains**, on the one hand, and to **allow imports from third**

countries on the other hand. The farmers there cannot simply produce according to any number of cultivation standards, but need the security of a larger market outlet. And food retailing, in turn, must ensure a certain standard of year-round supply of tomatoes, for instance, if the product is to be placed on the market.

Our strategy is to work towards an **improvement**, you might also say modernisation, of **EU-Organic Farming**. We have submitted a relevant memorandum in Brussels. Here, too, I request your support!

And yet another appeal I want to direct to all of us this time: we need much more **education and research specifically in the organic farming sector and generally on issues relating to sustainability**.

My vision is that training and university courses in this subject area become mainstream and are not relegated to an exotic niche. My vision is, that sustainability in all its dimensions provokes a **shift of paradigm also in the sciences** and will be a source for the curiosity and exploratory urge of teachers and students alike! But this also requires public support and the backing of NGOs. Let us work out new ways here together!

I turn to a sensitive issue now. Consumers as well must be prepared to contribute to the turnaround in agriculture. Last year German consumers already spent more money on meat. **This shows that cognitive patterns and behaviour are changing.** Consumers are beginning to pay a fair price for safety and quality.

I keep on telling farmers what our goal must be: no matter which product, if cars, tights or meat, our **locational advantages in Germany and Europe are quality and safety**. This must be universal knowledge all around the globe. We will never be able to win the fight of „ever more at ever lower prices“!

If they see our products, people should automatically think of the highest quality and safety! Our motto is: Quality pays off! Worldwide.

But still the higher price at the counter is not always passed on to producers.

In **France** farmers' representatives sat down around a table with representatives of marketing and trade so that farmers could assert a higher share in the value-added!

Here, too, what matters is to bring together the entire food chain to achieve fairness in profit distribution. So that profits actually reach the farmers!

I am told, that the **debate in Great Britain** takes a somewhat different course. Cuts in costs are to expand the market, which recorded a 40% increase in sales even last year. I welcome this as we urgently require organic staple foods as well which are affordable for all of us. But the will to establish organic products further in the mainstream and secure market shares must not result in a new **price dumping spiral**. Organic farming plays a key

pioneering role for sustainable land management and welfare-oriented livestock farming.

Organic farmers need an adequate income.

This is a question of fairness, but it is also part of society's responsibility!

In Germany an **“Action Programme on Organic Farming”** is already in place. You surely know that we try to channel the European promotional funds into the second pillar via the so-called **modulation** to assist farmers who manage their farms in a sustainable way. We have also agreed with the Länder (federal states) to use the promotional instrument of the **Joint Task to assist the conversion to welfare-oriented livestock husbandry, regional marketing as well as agri-environmental measures**.

But all that is not sufficient enough to ensure a future for small and medium-sized farmers. This is the reason why I announced an **“Action Programme on Peasant Farming”** at the end of last year designed to support organic as well as conventional peasant farms. Your idea of an integrated approach to rural development has been very useful for me!

Peasant farms must not be an **endangered species**. The socially explosive issue and question is:

How much are our landscapes worth?

How much are rural areas worth?

And above all, what do we want to do that people like to live there?

Rural areas - our future!

Our aim is to develop rural areas so that people like to live and work there and produce what benefits man.

This means for us to strengthen the so-called **regional value-added chains** so that regionally grown products can also be processed, for example, in gastronomy or communal catering establishments like youth hostels. And to encourage tourism, for example. And as a result- you remember the beginning of my speech- **to strengthen again the relation of citizens to rural areas**. So that children know again that milk does not come from purple cows or carrots grow on trees!

All this is well known to you and there is no need to depict a scenario of future rural areas for you. A scenario which some people misunderstand, well, misunderstand quite deliberately as old-fashioned or nothing but “back to the roots”.

No, the strengthening of the value-added chains in rural areas is ultra-modern and makes up the future viability of these areas! People in Great Britain have surely become particularly sensitised by recent crises. In particular the occurrence of **FMD** was a disaster for the rural communities. It became quite clear that no “marginal economic sector”, that is agriculture, was affected. Let me just mention tourism as an example.

It became clear that we must keep agriculture viable as the

heart of rural areas - for intact landscapes and rural areas, where people live, work and find recreation!

I know from my last visit that the Soil Association has been dealing with that problem for some time already. That it has already developed a concept to establish **decentralised development centres designed to promote rural development as regional engines**. We share this concern.

In Germany, we have now embarked on the path of model regions. This is why we organised a competition last year at federal level called "**Active regions - Rural areas shape the future**". The response has been enormous. A jury has selected 33 regions so far going now into the second and final round. About half of these regions will benefit from great financial support for regional development in the next two years to take matters into their own hands. I am sure that all regions having participated in the competition have already learnt a lot and will continue to work on their individual concept!

The different players were required to join forces to take part in the competition. They had to be willing to **shape their future together** and in the process take ecological and farming aspects into account, but also labour-market aspects, for example. Because unemployment is enormous in rural areas and women are particularly affected. **Women** must benefit in any case from these funded pilot projects.

Due to the still prevailing gender roles women in the countryside are particularly affected by a weak infrastructure, e.g. a missing system of childcare and care for the elderly, when schools are too far away and people are only mobile if they have their own car!

Life in the countryside and particularly on one's own farm must be attractive, also for women and young people. Because they want to develop their own potential, just like people in other professional groups. Women don't want to be forced into farmwork, just because their husbands are the manager. This is another reason why our rural areas are bleeding dry.

Women are still needed to run a farm today in most cases. "**Women are an asset**", this is what my counterpart from Lower Saxony calls it. What he means is that if you make an honest calculation of the job performance in the house and on the farm in Germany, women obviously generate an average of 95 % of the income. And that's not all. **I know that in most cases rural women are the vital driving force behind rural development.**

I am very pleased that during the **Spanish Council Presidency Minister Canete** wants to give particular priority to **rural areas** and also specifically to the **situation of women and farmers' social security**. It is planned that the informal Agriculture Council will amply deal with this issue, and all member states will be sent a detailed questionnaire beforehand. Of course I hope that Great Britain will be a very committed contributor!

We need rural areas with people also working there:

in agriculture, in the upstream and downstream sectors and in the further course of the value-added chain. During the last ten years the number of agricultural holdings in Germany decreased by a third. Yet even today one job in nine is still in rural areas in Germany!

My vision is a new generation of women farmers and farmers who would like to take over a farm or even purchase a farm for the first time.

Moreover, rural development is also of particular importance with a view to **EU enlargement**.

I support Commissioner Fischler's statement that the midterm review of Agenda 2000 now sets the course for the development of rural areas in the candidate countries - whether there will be an industrialisation of the farming sector in these countries or whether peasant farming and hence the people in rural areas will have a chance.

Gearing the midterm review of Agenda 2000 to the future!

This is why from 2004 onwards we favour the implementation of compulsory modulation in the Community, a demand not only made by us, but also by the EU Commission. Because this is the only way to prevent candidate countries from investing into an obsolete system.

What we need are jointly developed **future scenarios** which provide prospects for the future **for a new generation of farmers in the entire EU!**

The reallocation of direct payments in favour of rural areas and environmental protection has another important advantage: It brings the payments into line with WTO rules and, as you know, this means that they are viable for the future!

Modulation shows in an exemplary way where the **future aid policy is heading: phasing out indiscriminate subsidisation and introducing targeted payments for services demanded by society and rendered by farmers.**

The reason why we advocate a reorientation of area payments in the discussion on the "mid term review" at European level is the young generation primarily. Because it needs a scenario for the future if it is to commit itself to agriculture.

Two factors are the main basis for the young generation of farmers: They need to feel once again that they are appreciated by society and they need the confidence of consumers.

Taxpayers want to know exactly where their money goes. And they sometimes take a very critical view of the European Agricultural Policy. Yet, if the change in outlook in our countries persists we will very well be able to convey to our citizens in the future that certain services of managing the cultural landscape and protecting resources, which cannot be rewarded by the market, **need to be remunerated on a permanent basis.**

As minister I am the advocate of consumers and farmers. Of all women farmers and farmers! It is my task to ensure the framework conditions for a trustful relationship in the entire food production chain:

I think that we have achieved a lot in a short period of time in terms of **bringing together supply and demand** and **ensuring safety for both sides**. We can now build on this and develop scenarios for future state action along the lines of our visions.

Assuming responsibility at national and international levels with the new agricultural policy!

We all know that agricultural policy is no national business and that the European and global contexts are quite essential.

We therefore need as many **allies** as possible to be able to **implement wise policies in Brussels**. We always need concepts which can also stand their ground in the international context.

This also means the responsibility of always considering the international market activities against the **background of the so-called North-South problem**. So that concepts which to some extent might make sense here in Europe do not run counter to, for instance, the interests of the so-called developing countries.

Some people have also voiced these concerns with respect to our reorientation of farming. They said that the U-turn on farming could lead to a new form of nationalist protectionism. Ecoprotectionism in some way. This is not true at all! Because we are fully aware of our enormous responsibility. We know that many people world-wide will be affected if we embark on a new course here.

The question concerning its international repercussions, in particular on poor countries, has always formed an integral part of green politics. Today we put it differently: We call it one of the **challenges posed by globalisation**.

A decisive principle of our New Agriculture Policy is the motto **“regional is the first choice”**. This is the key to the development of our rural areas. However, this is also the key to strengthening structures in the developing and threshold countries, since about **70 % of those suffering from hunger** live in rural areas. We want to strengthen these areas, as they exist to feed people. It is absurd that people in rural areas are the ones who suffer most from hunger! The fight against hunger also forms the basis for the fight against poverty.

This is why I am advocating an **international Code of Conduct for every human being’s right to access to adequate food**. We have to **fight world hunger** if peace, and democracy as a form of state organisation, are to be given a chance.

Only those with means to live and eat can learn, work and develop a sense of solidarity and a democratic state, in

which the land does not turn into a crop area for multinational enterprises.

Here I would like to ask for your full support in this important project!

Sometimes, transnational enterprises forge unholy alliances with national elites. They want to do business on the world market and do so under the guise of overdue liberalisation.

What is more, it is particularly problematic if small farmers are forced to grow GMOs, which creates an unacceptable dependence on **businesses operating transnationally**. This is another facet of globalisation, too, and we must not shirk actively taking sides with those people. **We promote a modernisation that serves people and protect people where their health, self-determination and public welfare is at stake.**

This is an important point when we negotiate about the introduction of **environmental and social standards** at the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)**. **Child labour, environmental destruction** – we want to know, and consumers should know, too, how the goods we buy have been produced. This is consumer protection. Yet this is also a consistent **green answer to globalisation**.

Freedom of choice and safety are the core principles for my ministry’s activities. They have to apply to producers as well as to consumers and also to farmers worldwide.

However, one thing is for sure already today: The liberalisation of global agricultural trade will progress anyway. However, for the first time the EU can play an active part in the WTO negotiations. Plus: **By including the issues of consumer protection, animal welfare and environmental conservation in the WTO negotiations the reorientation of agri-food policies will be safeguarded within an international reference framework!**

In Doha the developing countries largely supported **the EU for the first time**. And, thanks to the Doha results, for the first time we can achieve a fair liberalisation.

However, **fairness goes beyond a liberalisation** of the world market. It must always be geared to the farmers on the spot.

I believe I can make a contribution in this respect with our model of an agricultural policy that is as regional as possible. Staple foods should chiefly come from regional production and meet the demand of the internal market. This is ecological, social, sustainable and economically the wisest solution, too.

The commitment to such a policy should be a **yardstick for good governance**, too! Hopefully the **Code of Conduct for the right to adequate food** already mentioned will become such a yardstick!

Ensuring freedom of choice – also with regard to green genetic engineering!

I would now like to address an issue of global dimensions that is currently a very topical issue for us in Germany: **Green genetic engineering and the use of genetically modified organisms.**

In this context, the **citizens' freedom of choice is of primary importance** to us, in this context especially the farmers' and the consumers' freedom of choice.

At present farmers do not have a free choice between feedingstuffs with or without GMOs. As you know, this does not constitute a problem for an organically managing farmer who produces at least most of his own feed himself and might buy an additional share on the market - certified organic and therefore GMO-free.

However, it does **constitute a major problem particularly in regions of my country with high stocking densities and conventional intensive stockfarming.**

The increased cultivation of protein-rich fodder crops does not only raise development policy questions, but in some regions these crops are predominantly grown with the aid of genetically modified seeds. According to estimates the area under GMO crops has grown by 19 % since 2000.

However, consumer confidence has not grown. Consumers want to have a free choice when it comes to GMOs, and they will blame farmers if they cannot ensure that, for instance, the beef they offer has been produced without the use of GMOs. As far as I know the organic boom here in Britain is especially linked to the rejection of and uncertainty about GMOs.

We take this uncertainty among consumers very seriously and consider the results of this poll to be a clear task. As Minister of Consumer Protection I therefore feel that I have to ensure the **citizens' freedom of choice** through a consistent information policy as regards green genetic engineering, too. **This is why we need clear labelling rules and traceability of GMOs, including feedingstuffs.** Because also farmers must have a choice!

Farmers must be able to freely decide on the production rules they want to adhere to and in which market segment they want to operate. **We will do everything to ensure that our agricultural sector is in a position to meet consumer demand and to produce in a demand-driven way.**

First legal disputes, for example in Canada, show what it means to authorise the cultivation of GMOs without any restrictions. Sometimes it means that it is no longer possible for the neighbouring farmer to produce GMO-free crops. They have already found maize pollen which had flown 1.5 kilometres. Thus, outcrossings are not a theoretical, but a very real problem and can render organic farming impossible.

So what we have to do now is to ensure freedom of choice!

It is of decisive importance that currently comprehensive rules governing the **authorisation of genetically modified feedingstuffs are being developed at European level**, something we have been suggesting for some time. And I

hope that we will be able to make GMO-free feedingstuffs a criterion also for the label relating to the conventional meat sector that we plan to grant in Germany, because the label is to be called **QS: Quality and Safety** (Fortunately this motto has the same meaning in English and in German!)

Consumer rights also include the right to be heard. This is why in December we launched the **discussion forum "green genetic engineering"** which is to look into all ethical questions, encompassing all social groups. Their fears of, for instance, the so-called terminator technology or their hopes for the fight against poverty to examples like never-soggy crunchy Cornflakes, with which obviously British citizens are to be blessed in the future! We believe that this dialogue is also necessary for a basis **to decide on further state action, e.g. legislative processes.**

Final remarks

All these points, however, must not be applicable to so-called western states only. **They apply to all people, because safety is indivisible!**

Every human being has the right to access to sufficient and healthy food, that is to food security and safety. My vision is to have this achieved for all people. The concept of achieving this for all people determines my political aims.

We can achieve it! Most probably not with any tool like green genetic engineering which many consider to be a panacea, but **with hard work towards a sustainable and viable management of this world's resources and by treating others with dignity.**

So that the writer Ephraim Kishon will once not be right when he writes: "Man is making even deserts flourish. The only desert still in his way is in his mind."

And therefore our visions are most precious to us. I am happy that I have had an opportunity to share some of them with you!

News from Greece

CALL FOR PARTNER YOUTH ORGANISATIONS & GROUPS MULTILATERAL EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE EUROMED / YOUTH PROJECT YOUTH MOBILITY FOR MED SUSTAINABILITY!

This is a brief presentation for the Multilateral EVS Project CEYouth Mobility for Med Sustainability!¹ initiated by MARE

- MEDITERRANEAN SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL YOUTH NETWORK.

MAREnet Secretariat - MEDITERRANEAN SOS plans to apply for that project by 1st November 2002.

Please note that this communication is a first call for interested organisations and volunteers that want to be involved in the project. We have not yet included any official forms to be filled - this will be done at a later stage of project planning.

What is needed immediately from you is an initial expression of interest, so that we can include you in the communication list that will cooperate closely to jointly design in detail the project. It follows that an initial 'expression of interest' is not-binding for your organisation, official forms will be filled / signed during September 2002.

What is 'Multilateral' & 'Euromed' EVS'?

We are working in the framework of the Action 2 of the YOUTH Program, to establish a stable basis for mutual exchange of volunteers from countries of the 'Euro-Mediterranean' region (that is 15 EU + 12 Mediterranean countries, see table below).

The project will promote youth mobility: young people, under 26 years old, can go to another country and work in a non-profit organisation.

The project covers travel / visa costs and pocket money per month for the volunteer, while the host organizations gets funding in order to provide food & accommodation, technical and mentor support to the volunteer and linguistic training.

The proposed project - being under the EUROMED/YOUTH Program - especially allows only:

- Organisations in EU countries to host volunteers both from EU and Med countries
- Organisations in Med countries to host volunteers only from EU countries
- Organisations from both the EU & Med countries to send volunteers

15 Member States of the European Union (EU)
12 Mediterranean partner countries

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey

Why participate in EVS?

The project can benefit sending/hosting organisations and

individual volunteers in many ways:

- For sending & hosting orgs, with the establishment of relationships, creation of new partnerships and exchanging of experience and good practices between organizations from the North & South of the Euro-Mediterranean region. Moreover it is a possibility for NGOs and organizations not yet involved in YOUTH projects to acquire experience in planning and participating in multilateral exchange schemes.
- For host organisations, by having motivated international volunteers ready to invest skills and energy in a local project for the environment, local development or social issues
- For the volunteers, by providing opportunities for young people to live an interesting experience abroad, know different cultures and ways of life and acquire valuable professional skills and working experience in an international context

Who can participate?

As the project is an initiative of MARE - MEDITERRANEAN SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL YOUTH NETWORK, member organisations and youth groups that have participated in past projects are particularly expected to participate and - in case of high demand - will be given priority.

MAREnet Secretariat Office - Mediterranean SOS in Athens-Greece - will co-ordinate the application procedure and the implementation of the project, with the close collaboration and control of partner organisations and groups.

We are looking for:

- Host/sending organisations/groups from at least 6 EUROMED countries, balanced between EU and Mediterranean countries. Those host/sending organisations must exchange among them at least 12 volunteers. Exchanges must be arranged so that a hosting organization can involve in its own hosting project no more than 4 volunteers and no more than 2 coming from the same country.
- Organisations that want to host volunteer(s) must have the capacity to provide some 'mentoring', support accommodation and running and/or planning specific project(s) that the volunteer can be involved.
- Organisations that want to send volunteers must gather information from interested individuals and provide them with some elementary information about the project.
- Individual volunteers must provide a CV and motivation letter with all relevant information needed in order to evaluate their participation. Moreover, they will have to find a 'sending organisation' from their country of origin to participate in the project.

Briefly about the implementation of the project:

When approved, the project will start on the 1st April 2003.

A training that will take place in Greece will be an opportunity for the volunteers for meeting each-other and exchanging expectations, while getting information about hosting projects and generally on host countries' context.

Every hosting project will last 6 months or one year.

Two evaluation meetings (one mid-term and one at the end) will gather all the participants and give the occasion to share the results, assess the achievements and difficulties of the whole project.

Project Co-ordinator (MedSOS) will handle the finances of the EVS project, with the legal responsibility to allocate the sums accordingly to the hosting organizations and the volunteers.

The project will fully cover expenses related to visa and/or vaccination needed and travel from/to country of origin via Greece (for participating in the training). It will also fully cover the expenses for personal support to the volunteer, accommodation/food, local transportation, linguistic training and some pocket money. In special cases additional (fully justified) sums can be allocated for special needs or for young people with less opportunities.

For any further more information you can visit the European Commission's YOUTH web site <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth/youthprogram.html> and look at the Action 2, European Voluntary Service, User's Guide. Very helpful is also the www.sosforevs.org web site.

How / when to apply:

The deadline for submitting application for this Multilateral EVS Project is 1st November 2002. By that date we will have to provide all the endorsement letters and related documentation of every partner organization and full information about respective hosting projects.

WHAT IS NEEDED AT PRESENT (BEFORE 31st AUGUST 2002) IS AN INITIAL - NOT BINDING - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FROM ASSOCIATIONS WILLING TO JOIN THE PARTNERSHIP AS HOST/SENDING ORGANISATIONS, AS WELL AS FROM INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS.

PLEASE REPLY ASAP TO THIS MAIL, TO BE INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNICATION LIST FOR THE COMMON PREPARATION OF THIS PROJECT!

For more information, please contact:

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Next Newsletter

Copy dead-line for the next newsletter is **1-2-2003**

Please send all your text by email or send a disk in word-format or rtf-format to our office in Stuttgart - we don't want to type your text.

And please send all your email-adresses and url's for your website.

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